Province of
British Columbia
PLUMPER COVE MARINE
PARK MASTER PLAN

Lower Mainland Region
Park Operations Branch
Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division
Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing
North Vancouver, B.C.

PLUMPER COVE MARINE PARK

MASTER PLAN

DECEMBER, 1980

File: 2-7-509-27

105-03320/

ADDENDA

Plan for Plumper Cove Marine Park

This plan has been reviewed and is approved with the following comments and conditions:-

1. It does not conform to the Master Plan format in the following areas: Park Resources Statement - description and analysis in more detail.

   Zoning - Development Zone will include the entire campground.

2. The plan will be reviewed in 5 years or if and when it is required for public distribution. At that time, it should be updated to conform to the approved Master Plan format as outlined in 1. above.

Recommended: G.F. Mant — Manager, Planning Section — June 26 1981 — Date

Approved: George Bracket — Director, Planning and Design Branch — June 29/81 — Date

Mr. G. Trachuk
Director
Planning and Design Branch
Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division
Victoria, B.C.

Mr. J. C. Leman
Regional Director
Lower Mainland Region
Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division
North Vancouver, B.C.

This Master Plan for Plumper Cove Marine Park

is submitted for your approval.

J. C. Leman
J.C. Leman
Regional Director

Approved: _____ _____
G. Trachuk, Director Date

Recommended: F P Delikatny JAN. 14/81
F.P. Delikatny,
District Superintendent Date

Recommended: _____ _____
G.F. Macnab Date

PLUMPER COVE MARINE PARK MASTER PLAN

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. Setting

Plumper Cove Marine Park is located on the west side of Keats Island in scenic Howe Sound, less than one mile east of Gibsons. Protected by the two Shelter Islands, this marine park has long been a popular stop-over for boaters.

The climate of Howe Sound is a temperate one with typically sunny and dry weather during the summer months. This plus moderate sea breezes help to create an idealistic boaters paradise readily accessible to the Greater Vancouver population.

Plumper Cove Marine Park was established in 1960 and contains 34 hectares of representative Coastal Douglas fir upland and westerly marine foreshore. Accessible only by boat this park is an integral part of the existing Provincial Park marine system which stretches north to Desolation Sound.

This park is presently fully developed and offers excellent opportunities for marine access, moorage, camping, picnicking, hiking, beach combing, and other related activities.

Figure 1

Location Map

(on separate page)

2. Regional Perspective

Plumper Cove Marine Park, situated on the northwest corner of Keats Island, is only minutes away by boat or passenger ferry from Gibsons Landing. Lying approximately 15 kilometres northwest of Horseshoe Bay, it is strategically placed for both day and overnight use from Vancouver Harbour.

Recreational boating is becoming increasingly popular especially in Howe Sound due to its close proximity to Lower Mainland residents. Environment Canada's study, *Resident Boating in Georgia Strait* (Mos and Harrison), reports that over 2700 boats are moored in Howe Sound, about 13,000 households in Gibsons, Squamish, and the North Shore own one or two boats, and 43,000 central Greater Vancouver households are boat owners. During an average summer weekend, there are about 400 recreational boats on Howe Sound each day. As there is a shortage of on-shore recreation facilities for the boating public it is anticipated that use will continue to rise at Plumper Cove.

PHOTOGRAPH NOT AVAILABLE

Keats Island was named after Richard Keats, who over a century ago served with Admiral Nelson and was commander of the warship "HMS Superb". In 1859, the Royal Navy Survey ship, "HMS Plumper" visited Keats Island, and subsequently Plumper Cove received its name.

3. Park Facilities and Use Patterns

Facilities in Plumper Cove Marine Park include 16 campsites and a day use picnic area. There is over 60 metres of developed beach and 2 kilometres of hiking trail. There is a large wharf for boaters wishing to camp or picnic at this park which can accommodate up to 20 boats.

Camp and Day Use

The major recreational use found in this park is during the summer months, especially July and August. Boating attendance increased by 23% in 1979 to 5013 parties or 16,015 persons.

FIGURE 2
Attendance by Years
(Boating Parties)

Year	Total
1979	5013
1978	3850
1976	5064
1973	2911

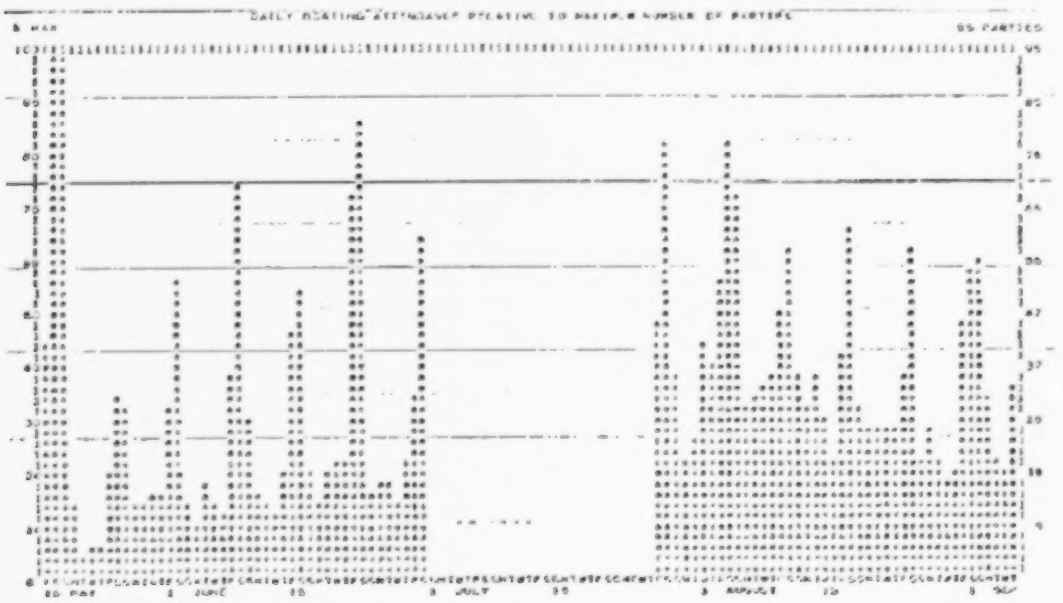

FIGURE 2

Attendance by Years
(Boating Parties)

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1978	3850
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4. Projected Demand

Howe Sound has long been a favorite with recreational boaters. Keats Island, therefore, will be affected by the rising demand for recreational areas so close to Greater Vancouver residents.

Studies on recreational boating provided the following additional information on the types of use found in Howe Sound.

1. A 1976 survey of recreational boaters in Howe Sound found that: 72.2% of the sample were residents of Vancouver (including North and West Vancouver) and 27.8% from the Lower Mainland. The main advantages to Howe Sound boating cited were:
    1) proximity, (76,5%)
    2) favorable weather conditions, protected waters (66.7%); and local scenery (40.3%)[1]
2. Of the total number of boats for rent in the metropolitan region, 63.6% are in Howe Sound and about 20.7%of the total wet berths are located in Howe Sound.[2]
3. While the population of Greater Vancouver Regional District increased about 10% between 1966-74, boat ownership increased about 60% between 1966-74.[3]
4. The major boating pressure from the boating public occurs during July and August. . .within easy distance of major population centers.

Present and projected population forecasts are furnished by the Greater Vancouver Regional District (Table 1). Participation rates and outings per year are illustrated in Tables 2 and 3 respectively.

TABLE 1: Lower Mainland Population 1976-1991

Forecast Assumption (Migration/Fertility)	1976	1981	1986	1991
Low/Low		1,348,826	1,421,133	1,487,093
Medium/Medium	1,277,029	1,377,316	1,479,094	1,575,278
High/High		1,405,052	1,535,373	1,660,679

TABLE 2: General Demand for Outdoor Recreation Activities (Medium/Medium)

Activity	Estimated Visitor Days (000's)		
	1981	1986	1991
Picnicking & Camping			
- picnicking	10,330	11,093	11,814
- group camping	413	444	472
- overnight camping	4,132	4,437	4,726
Water Sport			
- boating, canoeing, sailing	6,887	7,395	7,876
- other water sport	689	739	788

TABLE 3: Outdoor Recreation Preferences

Activity	Outings Per Person Per Year			
	USA	PUGET SOUND	LOWER MAINLAND	PARTICIPANT RATE %
Picnicking & Camping				
- picnicking	3.5	7.9	7.5	50
- group camping	.9	4.6	.3	3 – 8
- overnight camping	.9	4.6	3.0	40 – 50
Water Sport				
- boating, canoeing, sailing	2.2	6.7	5.0	30 – 35
- other water sport	.4	1.6	.5	-

* Tables 1, 2, and 3 are taken from the Greater Vancouver Regional District's *Outdoor Recreation Review, Regional Recreation Opportunities,* 1978.

B. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. Role

It is the purpose of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, to provide a diverse recreation system for both tourists and local residents in Howe Sound. The future development of Plumper Cove Marine Park will reflect the statements presented in the Keats Island Official Community Plan. This document was prepared by the Sunshine Coast Regional District and is now administered by the Islands Trust.

The primary role of this park is to provide recreational boaters in Howe Sound with sheltered moorage and upland access for such activities as camping and picnicking.

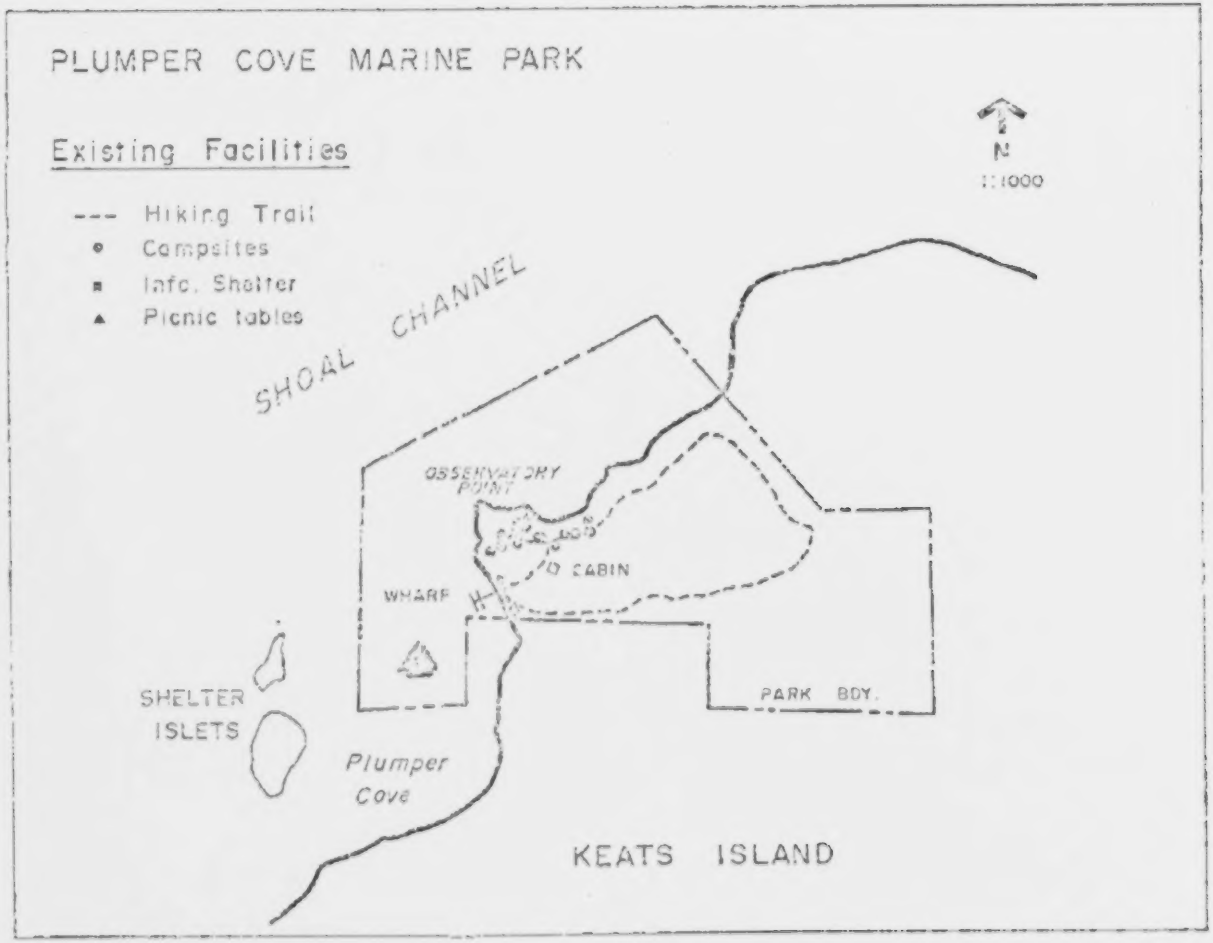
Additional opportunities for group camping, beachcombing, hiking, and nature interpretation, will also be provided.

2. Objectives

The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division along with other Provincial and Regional agencies will ensure that adequate recreation opportunities are provided within the context of a "standard" park development for intensive use.

PHOTOGRAPH NOT AVAILABLE

Plumper Cove Park is part of the overall system which satisfies the recreation objective of the Parks & Outdoor Recreation Division providing marine park opportunities in Howe Sound.


PLUMPER COVE MARINE PARK
Existing Facilities
--- Hiking Trail
Campsites
Info. Shelter
Picnic tables
N
1:1000
SHOAL CHANNEL
OBSERVATORY POINT
CABIN
WHARF
SHELTER ISLETS
Plumper Cove
PARK BDY.
KEATS ISLAND

C. PARK RESOURCES STATEMENT

PHOTOGRAPH NOT AVAILABLE

Plumper Cove Marine Park lies within the Coastal Douglas Fir biogeoclimatic zone. (Krajina, 1964)

PHOTOGRAPHNOT AVAILABLE

Soil contains large proportions of rock, sand, and gravel, in common with much of the Sunshine Coast. Plumper Cove Marine Park has two developed beach areas totalling over 60 metres in length.

C. PARK RESOURCE STATEMENT (continued)

PHOTOGRAPHNOT AVAILABLE

The sheltered moorage of Plumper Cove has made it a popular stop-over for boaters in Howe Sound. Approximately 20 boats can be accommodated at the Provincial Park wharf and as many as 30 boats have been counted anchored in Plumper Cove.

PHOTOGRAPHNOT AVAILABLE

The scenic resources in Howe Sound are found in its steep mountains, rugged coastline and the scattered islands and waters of the Sound.

D. ZONING

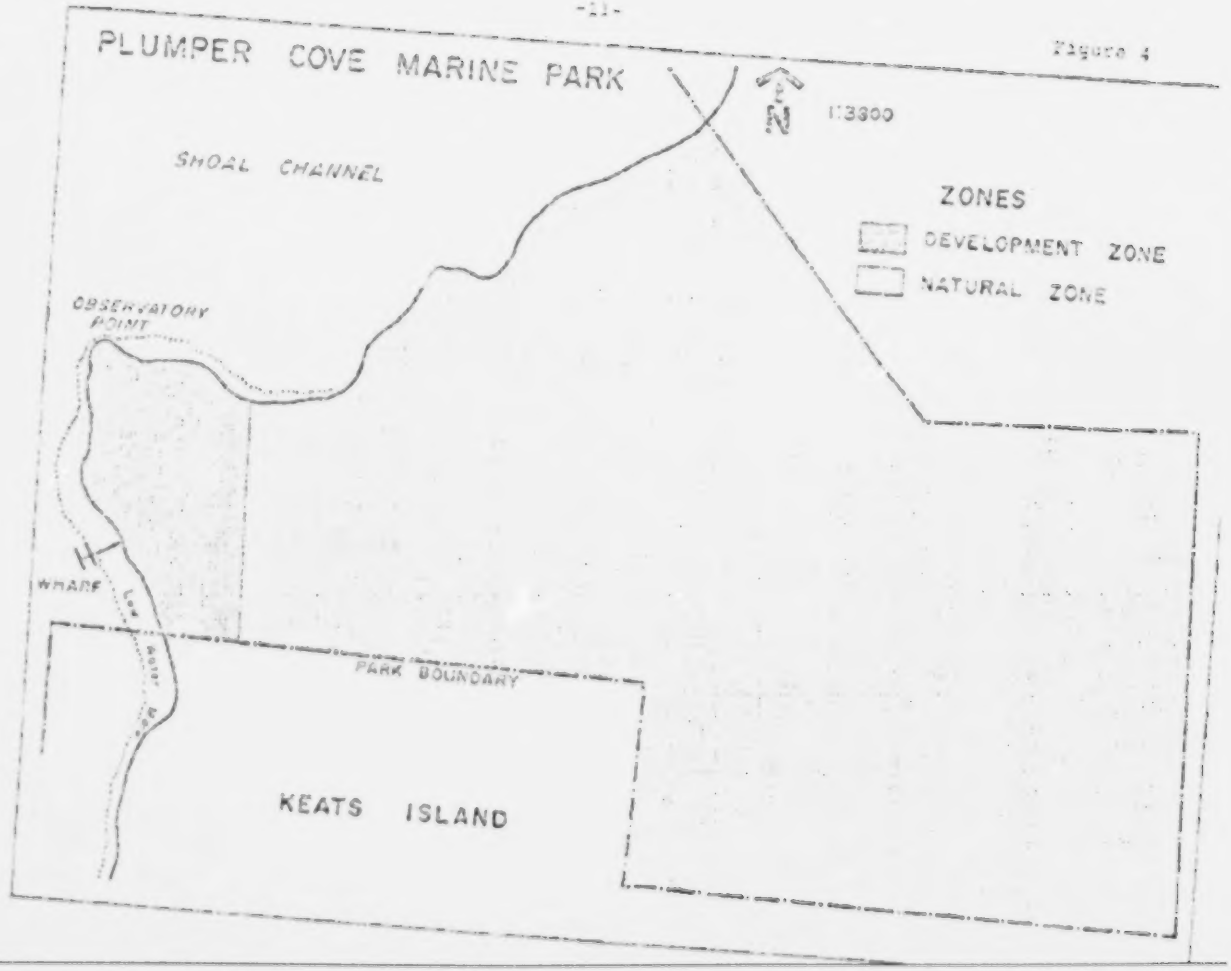
Figure 3 illustrates the zoning plan for this park. These zones are described as follows:

Development Zone

The objective of this zone is to provide a variety of facility-oriented recreational opportunities. Included in this zone is the campground consisting of 16 tent sites, 14 picnic tables, 6 pit toilets, developed beach and 2 kilometres of trail. A service sub-zone intended for use in the park operations rather than for public use is identified as the Ranger Cabin and workshop.

Natural Zone

This zone provides low intensity recreation opportunities and constitutes a relatively natural buffer for the Development Zone. The remaining area of Plumber Cove Marine Park falls into this zone as facilities and improvements may be introduced in order to channel or contain use.


PLUMPER COVE MARINE PARK
Figure 4
N
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SHOAL CHANNEL
ZONES
DEVELOPMENT ZONE
NATURAL ZONE
OBSERVATORY POINT
WHARF
PARK BOUNDARY
KEATS ISLAND

E. GENERAL MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

Plumper Cove Marine Park will be managed for intensive marine access camping and water-oriented public recreation. Overall management of this park falls under the Garibaldi District Office, with specific park management guidance coming from the local office at Porpoise Bay Provincial Park, 4 kilometres east of Sechelt. Inter-agency cooperation will continue with both Islands Trust and the Sunshine Coast Regional District.

F. SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT PLANS

Plumper Cove Marine Park is presently fully developed. With only minor facility improvements proposed, this park will remain basically at its existing level of development.

1. Park Resource Management Plan

With the exception of the developed walk-in camping area and service building, Plumper Cove Marine Park has been left in its natural state. The grassy picnic area is dotted with apple trees as it was once an orchard. A 2 kilometre perimeter hiking trail leads from the campground through lush Coastal Douglas fir vegetation in a loop fashion.

Last summer a windstorm brought down some of the more mature or rotting trees. It is recommended that continued tree pruning and "opening up" of the trail will improve the safety of the park and provide more enjoyment to park visitors.

2. Park Visitor Management Plan

Plumper Cove Marine Park experiences a peak use period phenomenon. (See Figure 2) Visitor use is mainly experienced on weekends with July and August receiving the highest attendances.

The main factors in limiting use at Plumper Cove are:

a) Weather - recreational boaters, especially those in smaller boats that travel only a few hours from their home base, are greatly affected by local weather conditions. For this reason attendance drops off in periods of poor weather and during the colder "shoulder" months.

b) Available Moorage - on a sunny summer weekend moorage space at Plumper Cove is at a premium. Many boaters who arrive on Saturday are turned away as there is no place to dock and the better anchorage sites are taken.

The following improvements are proposed to increase public enjoyment of this park.

a) Larger boats should be encouraged to moor in the bay so that more smaller boats can get access to Plumper Cove Park. The possibility of implementing a reserved moorage space system might be a solution to those boaters who are camping at the park and who go fishing during the day only to find no place to tie up on their return. Further consultation with District staff and a pilot program is recommended.

   The addition of mooring buoys is proposed to increase capacity. However, the ocean floor is good for anchoring in both bays and boaters should also be encouraged to continue this practice.

b) The availability of campsites is adequate. However, proper definition of each site and minor landscaping of the 16 campsites is suggested.

c) This park is popular for group camping. Organized parties from neighboring camps often use Plumper Cove. A separate group camping area with centralized service facilities would assist the seasonal park ranger in maintaining and operating this park. The promotion of group camping mid week would help to distribute park use more evenly.

d) The loop trail could be made more interesting with better signing and clearing some sites to allow hikers sea views. This trail is used infrequently and a second cut-off might be constructed for those persons wishing a shorter walk.

e) Minor landscaping improvements to the picnic area, plus reinforcement of the banks by the picnic tables, and tree removal are required to allow visitors better water views and more sunlight.

Administrative Plans

The administration of this park will come under Garibaldi District. A seasonal park ranger program is operated locally from Porpoise Bay Provincial Park, with normal management practices implemented.

Interpretive Plan

At the present time there is not an interpretive program at Plumper Cove Marine Park. Due to the types of use and the major attractions of this park (ie. boating, picnicking), it is recommended that:

a) no formal interpretation program with a naturalist be implemented. If sufficient requests come to run an interpretation program it would be possible that a naturalist could operate a satellite program out of Porpoise Bay Provincial Park once a week.

b) improvement be made to the information presently found on the Type II shelter. A marine theme might be presented in the form of a graphic display sign outlining additional marine parks from Howe Sound north to Desolation Sound.

c) the loop trail have self-guiding interpretive signs so visitors might better appreciate the natural vegetation and landscape.

H. BOUNDARY

The boundaries of Plumper Cove Provincial Park are described as Block B, District Lot 1468, Group 1, New Westminster Land District, containing 34 hectares, more or less. An additional 24 hectares of foreshore was also added to this marine park.

II. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

EARLY PRIORITIES

a) Facility Development

1. Improve the drinking water in the park by adding a chlorinator to the existing water system.
2. Locate mooring buoys for recreational boaters to anchor in Plumper Cove helping to relieve present over-crowding at the wharf.
3. Upgrade existing loop trail and sign. (New signs should inform the park visitor of the distance and time it would take to walk the trail and point out any unique or interesting natural features.) This could be part of a total information and interpretation signing program for Plumper Cove Marine Park.

LATER PRIORITIES

a) Facility Development

1. If use warrants, a group area should be designated and a shelter constructed to separate these organized groups (ie.) boy scouts, church parties, etc. from regular park visitors.
2. Add more buoys in bay northeast of Observation Point and Plumper Cove as demand for secure anchoring sites increase.